

**DOBBS FERRY  
UNION FREE SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

**INTERSCHOLASTIC  
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**

**For Athletes, Parents/Guardians, & Coaches**



**2025-2026**

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## ADMINISTRATION

### **Superintendent**

Mr. Ken Slentz  
[slentzk@dfsd.org](mailto:slentzk@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3028

### **Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Equity**

Dr. Darrell Stinchcomb  
[stinchcombd@dfsd.org](mailto:stinchcombd@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3059

### **High School Principal**

Dr. John Falino  
[falinoj@dfsd.org](mailto:falinoj@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3035

### **Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Facilities, and Operations**

Lisa Raymond  
[raymondl@dfsd.org](mailto:raymondl@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3030

### **Middle School Principal**

Mr. Patrick Mussolini  
[mussolinip@dfsd.org](mailto:mussolinip@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3058

### **Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Health**

Mr. Andrew Klaich  
[klaicha@dfsd.org](mailto:klaicha@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3109

### **Secretary for Athletics, Physical Education and Health**

Ms. Joanne Mattina  
[mattinaj@dfsd.org](mailto:mattinaj@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x3110

### **Director of Special Education**

Ms. Shari Kaplan  
[kaplans@dfsd.org](mailto:kaplans@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x1479

### **Assistant Director of Special Education**

Ms. Sarah Grosso  
[grossos@dfsd.org](mailto:grossos@dfsd.org)  
914-693-1500 x1480



I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and thank you in advance for all of your support of the many activities and athletic programs at the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District. Whether you are parents, guardians, teachers, staff, coaches, alumni, or Dobbs Ferry community supporters, I am certain you share in my pride of our students as they dedicate and commit themselves towards excellence in their chosen endeavors including athletics.

In Dobbs Ferry, interscholastic athletics are an extension of the educational experience and stand in support of the district's stated mission of developing independent, curious and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically, and are knowledgeable about the world around them. Participants in interscholastic sports are students first and foremost, and athletes second.

I am very excited about the positive direction of our athletic programs at Dobbs Ferry. I personally invite each of you to show your support of these programs by attending events throughout the school year. Your continued support is imperative as we build our student athletes to be outstanding representatives of our school and prepare them for a successful future.

This handbook provides the student-athlete and their parents/guardians with the necessary information to make the athletic experience a rewarding one. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the expectations, rules, and regulations that govern the Dobbs Ferry athletic program. I encourage you to visit our athletics webpage at [Dobbs Ferry Athletic Webpage](#) as there is an abundance of information on all aspects of our program as well as a comprehensive section on concussion education. I also encourage you to follow us on our various social media accounts.

The Athletic Department is always seeking ways in which we can improve our programs, teams, facilities and overall student-athlete experience. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Andrew Klaich  
Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Health  
914-693-1500 x-3109 klaicha@dfsd.org

# VISION, MISSION, AND STRATEGIC POINTS OF FOCUS

## Our Vision

Independent Thinkers Prepared to Change the World

## Our Mission

The Dobbs Ferry School District strives to develop independent, curious, and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically and are knowledgeable about the world around them.

## Our Strategic Points of Focus

In support of our mission, we have developed the following strategic points of focus that guide our work in creating the best possible conditions for effective teaching and learning which includes our athletics and co-curricular club activities.

- ***Curriculum Development and Implementation:*** By creating, adapting, and/or adopting rigorous Tier 1 curriculum that aligns with the International Baccalaureate standards; contains diverse perspectives and experiences; develops/enhances students' on grade-level abilities in reading, writing, listening and speaking, and mathematical understandings; and, as a result, students' thinking abilities as applied to a variety of complex problems, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- ***Instruction:*** By developing/enhancing our instructional staff's teaching abilities through an understanding of how students learn, research-informed instructional techniques and frameworks including the Response to Intervention (RtI)/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model, and effective feedback models from peers and supervisors, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- ***Assessments:*** By developing and enhancing clear understandings of the design and purpose(s) of effective assessments and how they can be utilized to improve instruction, by carefully selecting those assessments that we will use to measure student learning, and by supporting the data literacy of faculty and administration, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- ***Positive School Climate and Culture:*** By developing a welcoming school environment that is reflective of the diversity present in the larger community where all students feel included in what they encounter at school, including in their classroom resources, in differing historical perspectives that they learn about, in equitable opportunities for engagement, advancement and achievement, and the adults they interact with each day; by providing explicit instruction and structured interventions in social-emotional learning and executive functions that have a sound basis in educational research; by aligning our work with the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile; and by developing/enhancing our staff's abilities to identify, understand, and improve positive student behavior, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- ***Recruitment, Retention, and Development of Personnel:*** By investing in promising, culturally relevant practices for employee recruitment; by intentionally recruiting well-qualified

staff that reflect our students' demographics; and by providing ongoing, targeted professional learning opportunities, and proven methods of evaluation and feedback, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.

- ***Family and Community Communications and Engagement.*** By engaging in consistent and meaningful two-way communication with parents and families, and by inviting parents/guardians, families, and the community to participate in important initiatives, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- ***Long-Range Planning for District Facilities and Finances:*** By developing long-range financial and facilities plans that allow us to continue to provide excellent programs and opportunities for students in safe, secure, and welcoming environments, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.

## HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

Interscholastic athletics offer a variety of obvious fitness and health benefits for student athletes, while developing self-discipline and teamwork. Athletes develop strength and stamina while working as part of a team to meet collective goals. Participants learn teamwork, sacrifice, and resilience. Beyond these benefits, through participation in interscholastic sports, student athletes develop additional life skills that support success in school and life in general.

Dobbs Ferry student athletes are expected to develop, strengthen and demonstrate the traits identified in the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile of being Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk Takers, Balanced, and Reflective. Through participation in Interscholastic Sports athletes grow as learners and individuals, expanding their skill sets and growing in confidence, while learning to balance the various components of their lives. Participation in our various sports programs also provides the student athlete with opportunities to interact with and impact the larger community and world around them through various charitable and volunteer activities.

Similar to lessons learned in the classroom, lessons learned on the field or court, through participation in interscholastic sports, remain with students and serve them throughout their lives. Our student athletes benefit not just from the joys associated with wins and losses but from developing the lifelong skills a learner needs to be successful citizen in today's modern world that includes fulfilling the district vision of truly being *Independent Thinkers Prepared to Change the World*.

## HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

IB LEARNER TRAIT	EXAMPLES OF HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS
Inquirers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Athletes are constantly seeking strategies to improve their personal skills as well as effectively collaborate as a member of a team.</li> <li>● Athletes enthusiastically continue to search for ways to progress and grow as athletes within their respective sport identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement.</li> </ul>
Knowledgeable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Athletes are continuously increasing their knowledge base of personal skills, team strategies, leadership, improving team morale, and group dynamics.</li> <li>● Athletes continually explore and are exposed to multiple disciplines to maximize their athletic potential.</li> </ul>
Thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students and coaches work together to analyze strategies to optimize overall athletic performance.</li> <li>● Students learn to take responsibility for their actions on and off the field/court.</li> </ul>
Communicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Athletics stresses the use of positive and effective communication on a daily basis.</li> <li>● Athletes must listen to teammates and coaches and collaborate effectively to achieve success.</li> </ul>
Principled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Athletics are governed by a code of conduct which fosters integrity and honesty.</li> <li>● Coaches seek to promote justice and fairness by reinforcing positive behavior. This can be observed by the selection of captains and constantly stressing exemplary character of their athletes.</li> </ul>

Open-Minded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through athletics, teammates accept the whole group no matter what their background may be.</li> <li>• Students set aside their differences, learn from each other and view their team as a family.</li> </ul>
Caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dobbs Ferry athletic programs shows a commitment to service by undertaking multiple initiatives that have an impact on the community (ex. Creating and implementing youth sport camps).</li> <li>• Teammates and coaches show compassion and empathy to each other.</li> </ul>
Risk Takers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athletes are constantly taking risks. The act of trying out for a team is risk in itself.</li> <li>• Athletes take on leadership roles within the team and play new positions which create opportunities for students to step outside of their comfort zones.</li> </ul>
Balanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athletes are students first and must manage an extremely demanding schedule.</li> <li>• Our athletes understand that participating in a sport is one component of their lives and seek to find balance to promote personal well- being.</li> </ul>
Reflective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athletes continuously reflect upon personal and team strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>• Through reflection, students develop goals aimed to promote personal and team development. This reflection takes place multiple times throughout the season as well as during the offseason.</li> </ul>

## SPORTS OFFERED AT DOBBS FERRY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Athletic opportunities exist for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 on modified, junior varsity, and varsity teams. Interscholastic Athletics are governed by the rules of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association and Section One.

### Fall Sports

<b><i>VARSIITY</i></b>	<b><i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i></b>	<b><i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i></b>
Cheerleading	Boys Soccer	Boys Soccer
Cross Country	Girls Soccer	Girls Soccer
Football	Girls Volleyball	Girls Volleyball
Boys Soccer		Cross Country
Girls Soccer		
Girls Tennis		
Girls Volleyball		
<i>Girls Swim (merged w/Ardsley)</i>		

### Winter Sports

<b><i>VARSIITY</i></b>	<b><i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i></b>	<b><i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i></b>
Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball
Winter Track		Winter Track
Bowling		
Unified Bowling (March)		
<i>Boys Hockey (merged w/Irvington)</i>		
<i>Boys Swim (merged w/Ardsley)</i>		
<i>Ski (w/Ardsley)</i>		
<i>Fencing (merged w/Irvington)</i>		

### Spring Sports

<b><i>VARSIITY</i></b>	<b><i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i></b>	<b><i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i></b>
Baseball	Baseball	Baseball
Golf	Boys Lacrosse	Boys Lacrosse
Boys Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse
Girls Lacrosse	Softball	Softball
Softball		Track & Field
Boys Tennis		
Track & Field		
Girls Flag Football		
Unified Basketball (Apr/May)		

## TENTATIVE START DATES FOR VARSITY & JV SPORTS

All dates are established by the NYS Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) and are standard for all schools. Individual sections within NYSPHSAA can move them with a majority vote from all the school districts within the section.

	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
2025 - 2026	August 25	November 17	March 16
2026 - 2027	August 24	November 16	March 15
2027 - 2028	August 23	November 15	March 13

# ATHLETIC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHIES, EXPECTATIONS, AND RULES

## **MODIFIED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:**

This program is available to all students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and the relationship to the high school program. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition. Every effort will be made to provide meaningful playing time for all participants.

## **JUNIOR VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:**

The Junior Varsity level is intended for those student athletes who display the potential of continued development into productive varsity-level performers. Team membership varies according to the structure of each program.

At this level, student athletes are expected to commit themselves to the program, team, and continued self-development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play, in addition to socio-emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory.

The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to a successful junior varsity team and player. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season; however, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six day-a-week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. Some contests and practices may be held on holidays and during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, students participating at this level are expected to demonstrate a high degree of dedication and commitment.

## **VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:**

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport's program. Squad size at the varsity level may be limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. Therefore, it might be necessary for some teams to hold try-outs where cuts may be made. It is vital that each team member has a role and is informed of its importance. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A positive attitude, strong work ethic, commitment to team play, and an advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six day-a-week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. The dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity

program should be taken seriously. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest, and working to reach the group's and each individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity-level team.

### **TRYOUT PERIOD:**

Selecting or not selecting athletes is the single most stressful and difficult aspect for a coach/coaches to do. Tryouts will typically last 3-5 days. All students will have the right to try out for the various sports that are available in the fall (August-November), winter (November-February), and spring (March-June) seasons. As the number of students interested in participating on a team increases, it becomes impossible to keep everyone on the team and still ensure safety, provide quality instruction, and provide adequate playing time in contests. Therefore, when the numbers reach that threshold, student participation numbers are capped. Coaches will inform any player who is not selected for the team in a caring and positive manner. With input and guidance from the coaches, students should conduct a personal assessment of their skills comparing their ability and skills to other players trying out to determine if they have the ability to make the specific team. This self-evaluation process along with the coach's evaluation could prevent some of the disappointment of not making the team. Athletes are encouraged to ask for feedback from the coach regarding their progress and skill level during off-season workouts and tryouts.

### **PLAYING TIME:**

It is very difficult to accept not playing as much as one may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgements based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved on what they see during practices and games. At the varsity level in particular, the emphasis will be on developing the most competitive team possible given the talent of the athletes. Younger student athletes (freshmen and sophomores) may play over older student athletes (juniors and seniors). There is no guarantee of playing time particularly at the varsity level, and it is possible that students at the varsity level may not play during contests.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

It is the expectation that players are to be at all practices, meetings, games, and team events. No progress or improvement for an individual player or the team can be made without appropriate attendance. If alerting the coach is not possible, the player is expected to connect with the coach as soon as possible after returning to the school or next team function. Consequences associated with unexcused absences may consist of conditioning to make up time missed, partial/full game suspensions, and, in certain circumstances, dismissal from the team.

- When students and parents/guardians choose to take their family vacations during sport seasons it must be understood that the time missed can affect the team and conditioning. Vacations taken will have a large impact on a student's ability to make the team and/or participate in games.
- In order to participate, a player must be in school for ALL academic classes on the day

of the practice or contest. If a student is not in school the day of a practice or contest, a note must be provided (doctor's note, etc.) with an excusable reason. However, a student must attend a minimum of FIVE classes on the day of a game regardless of an excused absence. Extenuating circumstances must be presented to the Athletic Director in advance if a student will not be able to attend five periods on the day of a contest.

### **TEAM CAPTAINS (*Varsity Sports only*):**

Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Some coaches may not have season-long captains, but select one or two prior to the contest. Coaches will inform the team of the selection criteria and obligations of the position prior to the final decision of captaincy. Team captains or officers are expected to display high levels of honor, leadership, responsibility, positive attitude, respect, dependability, and have strong communication skills. Therefore, elected student athletes who are representing the team and school should conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Captaincy is not a rite of passage and is not limited to seniors. Any student who is involved in a violation of the Dobbs Ferry High School rules and regulations resulting in a suspension from school will lose the ability to serve as captain or to be appointed or elected to the position of captain of any school sponsored team for the period of one calendar year.

### **EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS:**

All equipment and uniforms issued to an athlete by the school are property of Dobbs Ferry Schools. They are required to be returned in the same condition as they were issued (excluding normal wear and tear) or the athlete is expected to compensate the Athletic Department for the lost or damaged equipment. Students may not practice or try out for another sport until issued equipment has been returned, bills have been paid and have been cleared by the previous coach.

### **LOCKERS:**

All lockers should be returned in the same condition they were found. All students are encouraged to lock up all belongings and not store any valuable items in the school locker room. Each student is responsible for keeping the locker clean and vacating their locker at the end of the school year.

### **POSTPONED GAMES:**

League rules dictate that contests postponed due to weather or other circumstances must be rescheduled on the next available school day or Saturday. In some situations, practice and/or games might be scheduled on a Sunday.

### **POST-SEASON PLAY:**

Varsity teams will usually enter post-season, Section One tournaments in the quest for Regional and State championships. These tournaments usually occur for up to two weeks after the last regular season contest and could be held during vacation periods and on weekends (including Sunday).

### **RETURN TO ACTION AFTER INJURY OR VACATION:**

The NYSPHSAA determines how many days of practice are needed before a scrimmage or a game. Those students returning from a prolonged injury or vacation generally need additional practices before having their eligibility restored in accordance with NYSPHSAA rules. All students who are returning from an injury, who have seen a physician, must have a doctor's note stating that they have been cleared before being declared eligible for practice and interscholastic competition. Special care and documentation is required for student athletes with head injuries.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINER AND REPORTING INJURIES:**

It is the responsibility of the student athlete to report any pain or discomfort they are experiencing immediately to the coach. All incidents or and/or injuries that occur with the team during a practice or contest both home and away are to be reported by the athletic trainer or coach. Coaches/trainer will complete the necessary paperwork following the injury and will submit it to the athletic office within 24-hours of the incident. The athletic trainer can provide immediate care, rehabilitation techniques, and/or prevention of injury for a student athlete, but the student athlete should see their physician. The athletic trainer will provide the coach with the necessary information for the student athlete to be cleared when he/she can return to play. In the event of a concussion, the student will follow all return-to-play and return-to-learn procedures.

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

Student athletes will be transported to away contests by school-authorized vehicles only. The district recommends that students return to school with their team. A student must submit a written parental authorization form to the coach if he/she chooses to be transported home by another adult, parent or a guardian after an away contest and must sign out with the coach prior to leaving the field. Forms can be found on the Athletic Website under [Resources](#).

### **MERGED TEAMS:**

Please note that transportation is ***not provided*** for any of our merged teams. It is the responsibility of the student athlete/parent/guardian to transport the student to the off-campus site. Please contact the Athletic Office for more information regarding merged teams.

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:** Being a student athlete and a member of a school team at Dobbs Ferry is a privilege. Student athletes are ambassadors of our school and district and as such, are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of behavior both in and out of school. Student athletes are expected to adhere to all provisions of the *Code of Conduct*. Violations of this code may result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or removal from a team.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

- **COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH**

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations your coach has for your child as well as player's on the squad
- Clear defined role on the team
- Location and times of practices and contests
- Team requirements (special equipment, off season conditioning)
- Procedures should your child be injured during participation

*We encourage your child to discuss any issues or concerns with the coach directly.  
This supports our goal that all student athletes learn how to advocate and  
communicate for themselves.*

- **ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES**

- Amount of playing time
- Team Strategy
- Play calling
- Other students/athletes

- **IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, PLEASE FOLLOW THIS PROCEDURE**

- Call/email to set up an appointment with the coach
- PLEASE do not attempt to confront the coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive relationships. A 24 hour wait period is suggested.

- **THE NEXT STEP: WHAT CAN A PARENT/GUARDIAN DO IF A MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?**

- Call and speak with the Athletic Director
  - At this meeting, further appropriate steps can be determined.
  - Parents are encouraged to discuss issues with the Athletic Director. However, if a parent has specific complaints regarding a coach, then the coach must have the opportunity to be present to meet with a parent.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR ATHLETICS

- All students participating in an interscholastic athletic activity will be monitored for academics and attendance. Those who are failing two or more courses at the time of the Progress Report or the Quarterly Report Card will be identified as at-risk for academics and will be placed in jeopardy of ineligibility (“probation”) for three weeks.
- Academic Probation carries over from athletic season to athletic season. Any student who fails one or more classes for the year will be ineligible for the fall athletics unless the class is taken during summer school and the student receives a passing grade.
- The Athletic Director will notify the students and their parents/guardians if a student is in jeopardy of ineligibility. During this time, a student is allowed to continue to participate in the activity. Students who are in jeopardy of ineligibility will have three weeks to improve their status to a passing grade.
- During this initial probationary period (“in jeopardy of ineligibility”), the student can remain on the roster and may participate in any and all practices and games/competitions. During this time, the student must attend T-periods, all classes, and complete all assignments for the course they are at-risk for. At the end of the three-week period, the student will be responsible for submitting a Probationary Progress Report (PPR) to their teachers for ALL subjects. Each teacher will fill out the progress report and the student will promptly deliver the completed report to the Athletic Director.
- The student’s progress during the probationary period will be reviewed by the Athletic Director. If the PPR indicates the student is passing, the probationary period will end. If the student is not passing but demonstrates significant effort to raise his/her grades, the academic probation will be extended for an additional three weeks, and the Athletic Director will determine if the student may participate in his/her activity.
- If the student is not showing any effort to raise their grade, the student will remain on the roster but **may not** play in any games or participate in any practices/games. Attendance at T-period is still required. At the end of the second three-week probationary period, the student is responsible for submitting another blank PPR to his/her teachers and then promptly delivering the completed PPR to the Athletic Director. If the student is failing and continues after the second probationary period, the student will be removed from all athletic activities. Any student who is removed from an activity due to academic failures may not try out or participate in an activity until the progress report or report card demonstrates the student is no longer ineligible.

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR STUDENT ATHLETES, PARENTS, AND SPECTATORS

The Dobbs Ferry Athletic Department recognizes the role of interscholastic athletics in defining ethical behavior and developing personal character in our students. Therefore, we ask:

## PARENT/GUARDIAN OF AN ATHLETE

- Maintain a positive attitude whether your team is winning or losing.
- Refrain from being insulting or showing bad sportsmanship during the competition. Any problems or concerns should be brought to the attention of the coach or the Athletic Director at the appropriate time.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Spectators, including parents who, in the judgment of the Principal, Athletic Director and/or the site administrator, behave in ways that are inappropriate and in violation of the Dobbs Ferry School District policies, will be spoken to about their behavior and may be asked to leave the competition.
- Respect the judgment of officials and strategy of the coach.
- Do not criticize players, coaches or officials for the loss of a game.
- Do not engage or make comments to visiting teams, coaches or parents.

## STUDENT ATHLETES

- Remember that academic performance is your primary responsibility.
- Treat advisors, officials, coaches and opponents with respect.
- Exercise self-control at all times, setting an example for others to follow.
- Adhere to all components of the district's [\*Code of Conduct\*](#) (a summary of the Code can be found in the middle and high school student handbooks).
- Report any injury to the coach no matter how slight it may appear. If the injury requires a physician's care, the participant must have written permission from the doctor before returning to the activity.
- Return any equipment. Uniforms issued to the participant must be returned in the same condition at the end of the activity. Equipment that is lost, damaged or stolen is the responsibility of the participant, and it is the responsibility of the participant to make restitution to the school.
- Extracurricular activities are not an excuse for being tardy to school on the day following a competition.

## SPECTATORS

- Demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.
- Show team support by making only positive comments.
- Show respect for the judgment and strategy of coaches and do not criticize players or coaches for loss of game.
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without gesture or argument.
- Acknowledge fields, courts, and equipment as the player's domain during contests.
- Remain within designated areas.
- Monitor the safety of children in bleachers and stands.
- Respect the law: all public schools are smoke-free and substance-free environments.

- Athletic contests on and off campus are an extension of the classroom. Therefore, all school rules are in effect.

## THE ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

### **About Athletic Placement Process (APP)**

The APP is only used when an individual athlete's athletic skills warrant moving to the junior varsity or varsity sport competition level, and therefore, will be initiated by the coach, athletic director, or physical education staff who recognizes the student's skills. The APP will be used either prior to the beginning of the season so that the student athlete can participate in the tryout period, or within the timeline specified by the NYSPHSAA Promotion rule.

Implementation process: In accordance with [district Policy 5280](#), the following steps are to be followed:

1. *Recommendation*: A recommendation from the coach must be received by the athletic director (not from a parent/guardian or student athlete). If the coach does not feel the student athlete will benefit from playing at the junior varsity or varsity level, the evaluation process will not go any further.
2. *Parent/guardian permission*: If the coach recommends a student athlete to participate in the APP process, the athletic director must receive permission from the parent/guardian.
3. *Administrative approval*: The student athlete must receive approval from the athletic director.
4. *Medical clearance*: The district's medical director must provide clearance for the student athlete to participate at the junior varsity or varsity level. If the medical director does not clear the student athlete, the student athlete may not proceed any further in the evaluation process.
  - a. The medical director will determine the physical maturity level of the student in relation to the sport and level in which they wish to participate using the Tanner Scale
5. *Sport skill evaluation*: Coaching staff will determine the skill level of the student athlete through various drills and exercises associated with the sport.
6. *Physical fitness testing*: A coach or physical education teacher will administer the required testing. This test cannot be administered by the coach of sport the student athlete is trying out for.
7. *Qualification Determination*: Based on steps 5 and 6, coaching staff will determine if the student is eligible to try out for the team. There is no appeal process if the student athlete is determined to not be eligible.
8. *Try Outs*: If a student is determined to be eligible for try outs, they will do so at the same level as other student athletes.
9. *Notifications*: A notification list of the scores of all athletes who have successfully completed the process and have been approved through the APP after the try out period has been completed will be sent to:
  - a. The athletic director of competitor schools

- b. Athletic governing board or section office

For all information on the APP including Tanner scores, fitness testing etc., please visit the following link: [Athletic Placement Process for Athletics](#)

### **ATHLETIC OPTION**

Students in grades 10-12 who are members of a varsity interscholastic team, have a grade of “B” or better in Physical Education, and have a full academic schedule\*, may request an *Athletic Option* for the purpose of using the time during their Physical Education class to study or complete class work.

Students who are on an *Athletic Option* will receive a grade for their physical education class from their coach. Students must get a passing grade in order to fulfill the New York State Physical Education requirement. Students who do not receive a passing grade from their coaches will not be permitted this option for the next sport season.

The purpose of Athletic Option is to provide students with additional study time during the school day. Students with an *Athletic Option* will report to The Commons. The student’s name will be added to an *Athletic Option* sign-in sheet which will confirm their attendance for that period.

The *Athletic Option* is a privilege, not a right. The administration holds the right to revoke the *Athletic Option* privilege. Student athletes must return to their regular Physical Education class the day after the sport season ends. If students drop or are dropped from an athletic team, they must return to their regular Physical Education class on the day of their next scheduled physical education class.

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES GOVERNING INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

In addition to the rules set forth in NYS Commissioner’s Regulations related to interscholastic athletics, the district also must adhere to state and federal laws and the Dobbs Ferry School District [policies](#). Specific laws, regulations, and policies that must be understood include:

- [Interscholastic Athletics](#): Interscholastic athletics for students are is an integral and desirable part of the district’s secondary school educational program. The district will encourage all eligible secondary students to participate in individual and team sports. Lifetime or carry-over sports are to be particularly encouraged and supported. Parity in the number and kind of sports activities for all students is a clear objective of the district.

- **Title IX (of the Education Amendments of 1972)**<sup>1</sup>: The Board of Education supports equal athletic opportunities for all students through interscholastic, intramural, and student co-curricular clubs and activities. To ensure equal athletic opportunities for its students, the district will consider: a) Its accommodation of athletic interests and abilities (the nature and extent of sports offered, including levels of competition, team competition, and team performance); b) Equipment and supplies; c) Scheduling of games and practice times; d) Travel costs and opportunities for travel; e) Assignment and compensation of coaches; f) Locker rooms, practice, and competitive facilities; g) Available medical and training facilities and services; and h) The nature and extent of support, publicity, and promotion, including cheerleading, bands, programs distributed at games, and booster club activities. The district may consider other pertinent factors as well. Each of the factors will be assessed by comparing availability, quality, type of benefits, kind of opportunities, and form of treatment. Identical benefits, opportunities, or treatment are not required. The district's Civil Rights Compliance Officer will coordinate the district's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. This person will be appropriately trained and possess comprehensive knowledge about applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and policies.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**: The Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment in our classrooms, in our student clubs, and in our athletics program where all students, especially those currently and historically marginalized, feel safe, included, welcomed, and accepted, and experience a sense of belonging and academic success. To this end, the goal of the district is to provide equitable, inclusive and diverse opportunities for all students to reach their potential. The district will acknowledge the presence of culturally diverse students and the need for students to find relevant connections with the subject matter and the tasks teachers ask them to perform. The district will create a culturally responsive environment that expects and supports high academic achievement for students and employees from all racial groups.
- **Anti-Harassment and Discrimination**: The Board of Education is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality. The Board recognizes that discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying, is detrimental to student learning and achievement. These behaviors interfere with the mission of the district to educate its students and disrupt the operation of the schools. Such behavior affects not only the students who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

To this end, the Board condemns and strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events. Discrimination, such as harassment, hazing or bullying that takes place at locations outside of school grounds, including cyberbullying, that creates or can be reasonably expected to create a risk of material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school or impinge on the rights of other students, is prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

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<sup>1</sup> Title IX requirements are currently being updated by the federal government. These changes may require revision of certain district policies. This handbook will be updated to reflect any such revisions.

- **Code Of Conduct for Students, School Personnel, Parents/Guardians, and Other Visitors:** The Board of Education of Dobbs Ferry is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Our intent is to provide an effective and fair Code of Conduct that includes a variety of strategies for supporting our students. We acknowledge that we must examine and consider a range of methods to solve behavior problems, prior to resorting to punitive consequences. Our ultimate goal is to help our students become responsible, caring citizens. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

The Board recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered promptly and fairly. The Board is also committed to complying with all state regulations regarding the above. To this end, the Board adopts this Code of Conduct. However, we are also interested in including information in this code that reflects the culture and values of each of our schools, schools where respect for all is honored and is the "code" that guides our work!

Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is against federal and state law. The Board of Education is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from such harassment, and therefore prohibits sexual harassment of students and employees in the district. The district has established detailed policies and regulations, for both students and employees, that address definitions, protections, prohibited behavior (including retaliation), prevention activities, training/education, complaint reporting, investigations, and consequences.
- **New York State Education Department Rules and Regulation:** NYS provides the opportunity for a safe, inclusive, and enriching athletic experience for all students outlined in the physical education section of the Commissioner's Regulations. The Department prioritizes safety, fairness, and equity, focusing on the holistic development of our young athletes to foster student growth by creating an educational and competitive experience within an atmosphere of sportsmanship. With a strong emphasis on social emotional learning, equity, inclusivity, and health, our athletic programs not only promote physical development but also instill values, skills, and health benefits that will serve them throughout their lives.
- **New York State Public High School Athletic Association Rules and Regulations:** The New York State Public High School Athletic Association Inc. is a non-profit, voluntary, educational service organization composed of public, parochial, and private schools

dedicated to providing equitable and safe competition for the students of its member schools. Membership is open to secondary schools providing interscholastic athletic activities for boys and girls in grades 7-12

Questions regarding laws, regulations, and district policies should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

The Dobbs Ferry School District affirms the right for every student to participate in the Physical Education program in the least restrictive environment.